

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously presented) A method for predicting the behavior of a current user of an interactive television service, the method comprising:

monitoring activity associated with a set top box of a current user engaging with the interactive television service;

identifying, by [[a]] the set top box, activities of the current user engaging with the interactive television service and conditions surrounding each of the identified activities of the current user, including amount of time the current user participated in each of the identified activities;

accessing a first collection of data comprising data associated with:

(i) cumulative activities associated with a set top box in which of other users ~~have participated~~,

(ii) conditions surrounding the cumulative activities associated with a set top box of the other users, including amount of time that each other user participated in each respective activity, and

(iii) patterns of behavior ~~exhibited by~~ associated with the cumulative activities associated with a set top box of the other users and the conditions surrounding the cumulative activities associated with a set top box of the other users ~~the other users in the cumulative activities~~, wherein the cumulative activities include viewing interactive television programming;

comparing identified activities and surrounding conditions of the current user with cumulative activities and surrounding conditions of the other users to identify similarities therebetween; ~~and~~

identifying a patterns of behavior associated with the identified similarity of activities and surrounding conditions between the current user and the other users; and

attributing to the current user [[a]] the identified pattern of ~~future~~ behavior as a future behavior of the current user, based on the identified similarities and on the patterns of behavior of the other users.

2. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the identifying step further comprises identifying personal attributes of the current user;

the first collection of data further comprises data associated with personal attributes of the other users; and

the comparing step further comprises comparing the personal attributes of the current user with the personal attributes of the other users to identify the similarities.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the first collection of data is based on activities the other users participated while engaged with the interactive television service.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the other users are unrelated individual persons.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the other users are members of a group and the current user is identifiable as a potential member of that group.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of:
periodically updating the first collection of data to reflect the other users' ongoing participation in additional activities.

10. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 9, wherein the step of periodically updating occurs in real time, during the current user's engagement with the interactive television service.

11. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
accessing a second collection of data comprising data associated with:

(i) a plurality of activities available via the interactive television service
and

(ii) information about each of the plurality of available activities
distinguishing the activity from others of the plurality of the available activities,
wherein the step of attributing includes selecting, from the plurality of available
activities and based on the second collection of data, one or more activities in which the
current user is most likely to participate during the engagement with the interactive
television service.

12. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein:
the interactive television service is accessed through the Internet,
the activities of the current user and the cumulative activities of the other users
include visits to Internet web sites, and
the first collection of data further comprises data associated with:

(i) an identity of each other user,
(ii) types of Internet web sites that each other user has visited,
(iii) content of each type of Internet web site visited by each other user,

and

(iv) amount of time spent at each type of internet web site by each other
user.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Original) The method of Claim 12, further comprising the step of:
periodically updating the first collection of data to reflect the other users' visits to additional Internet web sites.

15. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 14, wherein the step of periodically updating occurs in real time, during the current user's engagement with the interactive television service.

16. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 12, further comprising:
accessing a second collection of data comprising data associated with:

(i) a plurality of types of Internet web sites available for the current user to visit and

(ii) information about each type of the plurality of types of Internet web sites distinguishing the type from others of the plurality of types of Internet web sites,

wherein the step of attributing includes selecting, from the plurality of Internet web sites, one or more types of Internet web sites which the current user is most likely to visit during the engagement with the interactive television service.

17. (Previously presented) A method for predicting the behavior of a user of an interactive television service, during a particular period of engagement with the interactive television service, the method comprising:

monitoring activity associated with a set top box of a user engaging with the interactive television service;

identifying, by [[a]] the set top box, activities in which the user participates during the period of engagement and conditions surrounding each of the identified activities of the user, including amount of time the current user participated in each of the identified activities;

identifying, ~~by a set top box,~~ activities associated with a set top box of multiple other contemporaneous users of the interactive television service during the period of engagement and conditions surrounding the identified activities associated with the set top box of the other contemporaneous users, including amount of time that each other user participated in each respective activity, wherein the activities associated with the set top box of the other contemporaneous users include viewing interactive television programming;

maintaining a first collection of data comprising data associated with cumulative activities and surrounding conditions associated with the set top box of the user and associated with the set top box of the other contemporaneous users identified during the period of engagement;

determining, based on the first collection of data, patterns of behavior ~~exhibited by~~ associated with the cumulative activities associated with a set top box of the other contemporaneous users and the conditions surrounding the cumulative activities associated with a set top box of the other contemporaneous users ~~the user and the other contemporaneous users~~ during the period of engagement;

incorporating into the first collection of data, data associated with the determined patterns of behavior;

comparing (i) present activities and surrounding conditions of the user and (ii) the cumulative activities and surrounding conditions of first collection of data associated with the other contemporaneous users to identify similarities therebetween;

identifying a patterns of behavior associated with the identified similarity of activities and surrounding conditions between the current user and the other contemporaneous users; and

attributing to the user ~~[[a]] the identified pattern of future behavior as a future behavior of the current user based on the determined similarities and on the previously determined patterns of behavior.~~

18. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 17, further comprising:

continually updating the first collection of data to reflect participation of the user and the other contemporaneous users in additional activities and new patterns of behavior determined based on the participation of the user and the other contemporaneous users in additional activities,

wherein the steps of comparing and attributing are performed, at any given point in time, using the updated first collection of data.

19. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 18, further comprising:
accessing a second collection of data comprising data associated with:

(i) a plurality of activities that are available via the interactive television service and

(ii) information about each of the plurality of available activities distinguishing the activity from others of the plurality of available activities, wherein the step of attributing further comprises selecting one or more of the plurality of available activities in which the user is most likely to participate during the period of engagement with the interactive television service.

20. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 18, wherein:
the interactive television service is accessed through the Internet,
the user and other contemporaneous users activities include visits to Internet web sites, and

the first collection of data includes data associated with

(i) types of Internet web sites that the user and the other contemporaneous users have visited,

(ii) content of each type of Internet web site visited, and

(iii) amount of time spent at each type of Internet web site visited.

21. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 20, further comprising:
accessing a second collection of data comprising data associated with:

(i) a plurality of types of Internet web sites available for the user to visit and

(ii) information about each of the plurality of types distinguishing the type from others of the plurality of types,

wherein the step of attributing further comprises one or more of the plurality of types of web sites, which the current user is most likely to visit during the engagement with the interactive television service.

22. (Previously presented) A method for delivering targeted informational content to a current user of an interactive television service, comprising:

monitoring activity associated with a set top box of a current user engaging with the interactive television service;

identifying, by [[a]] the set top box, activities of the current user and conditions surrounding each of the identified activities of the current user, including amount of time the current user participated in each of the identified activities;

accessing a first collection of data comprising data associated with:

(i) cumulative activities associated with a set top box ~~in which~~ of other users ~~have participated~~,

(ii) conditions surrounding the cumulative activities associated with a set top box of the other users, including amount of time that each other user participated in each respective activity, and

(iii) preferences ~~exhibited by~~ associated with the cumulative activities associated with a set top box of the other users and the conditions surrounding the cumulative activities associated with a set top box of the other users ~~the other users in the cumulative activities~~, wherein the cumulative activities include viewing interactive television programming;

comparing identified activities and surrounding conditions of the current user with cumulative activities and surrounding conditions of the other users to identify similarities therebetween; ~~and~~

identifying a preference associated with the identified similarity of activities and surrounding conditions between the current user and the other users;

attributing to the current user [[a]] the identified preference profile as a prediction of future behavior of the current user based on the determined similarities and on the other users' preferences; and

generating an ordered list of informational content to be selectively delivered to the current user based on the identified preference profile.

23. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 22, wherein:

the identifying step further comprises identifying personal attributes of the current user;

the first collection of data further comprises data associated with personal attributes of the other users; and

the comparing step further comprises comparing the personal attributes of the current user with the personal attributes of the other users to identify the similarities.

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 22, wherein the first collection of data is based on activities the other users participated while engaged with the interactive television service.

27. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the other users are unrelated individual persons.

28. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the other users are members of a group and the current user is identifiable as a potential member of that group.

29. (Cancelled)

30. (Original) The method of Claim 22, further comprising the step of:
periodically updating the first collection of data to reflect the other users' ongoing participation in additional activities.

31. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 30, wherein the step of periodically updating occurs in real time, during the current user's engagement with the interactive television service.

32. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 22, further comprising:
accessing a second collection of data comprising data associated with:

(i) a plurality of activities that are available via the interactive television service and

(ii) information about each of the plurality of available activities distinguishing the activity from others of the plurality of the available activities, wherein the step of attributing a preference profile is based in part on those activities, from the plurality of available activities, in which the current user is most likely to participate during the engagement with the interactive television service.

33. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 22, wherein:
the interactive television service is accessed through the Internet,
the activities of the current user and the cumulative activities of the other users include visits to Internet web sites, and
the first collection of data further comprises data associated with:

(i) an identity of each other user,

(ii) types of Internet web sites that each other user has visited,

(iii) content of each type of Internet web site visited by each other user,
and

(iv) amount of time spent at each type of Internet web site by each other
user.

34. (Cancelled)

35. (Previously presented) A computer-readable medium having stored thereon
instructions for predicting the behavior of a current user of an interactive television
service which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform the steps of:
monitoring activity associated with a set top box of a current user engaging with
the interactive television service;

identifying, by [[a]] the set top box activities of the current user engaging with
the interactive television service and conditions surrounding each of the identified
activities of the current user, including amount of time the current user participated in
each of the identified activities;

accessing a first collection of data comprising data associated with:

(i) cumulative activities associated with a set top box ~~in which of~~ other
users ~~have participated~~,

(ii) conditions surrounding the cumulative activities associated with a set
top box of the other users, including amount of time that each other user
participated in each respective activity, and

(iii) patterns of behavior ~~exhibited by~~ associated with the cumulative
activities associated with a set top box of the other users and the conditions
surrounding the cumulative activities associated with a set top box of the other
users ~~the other users in the cumulative activities~~, wherein the cumulative activities
include viewing interactive television programming;

comparing identified activities and surrounding conditions of the current user with cumulative activities and surrounding conditions of the other users to identify similarities therebetween; ~~and~~

identifying a patterns of behavior associated with the identified similarity of activities and surrounding conditions between the current user and the other users; and

attributing to the current user [[a]] the identified pattern of ~~future~~ behavior as a future behavior of the current user, based on the identified similarities and on the patterns of behavior of the other users.

36. (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of Claim 35, wherein the identifying step further comprises identifying personal attributes of the current user; the first collection of data further comprises data associated with personal attributes of the other users; and

the comparing step further comprises comparing the personal attributes of the current user with the personal attributes of the other users to identify the similarities.

37. (Cancelled)

38. (Cancelled)

39. (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of Claim 35, wherein the first collection of data is based on activities the other users participated while engaged with the interactive television service.

40. (Cancelled)

41. (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of Claim 35, having stored thereon further instructions which, when executed by the processor, cause the processor to perform the step of:

periodically updating the first collection of data to reflect the other users' ongoing participation in additional activities.

42. (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of Claim 41, wherein the instructions that cause the processor to perform the step of periodically updating cause it to do so in real time, during the current user's engagement with the interactive television service.

43. (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of Claim 35, having stored thereon further instructions which, when executed by the processor, cause the processor to perform the step of:

accessing a second collection of data comprising data associated with:

(i) a plurality of activities that are available via the interactive television service and

(ii) information about each of the plurality of available activities distinguishing the activity from others of the plurality of the available activities, wherein the step of attributing includes selecting, from the plurality of available activities and based on the second collection of data, one or more activities in which the current user is most likely to participate during the engagement with the interactive television service.

44. (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of Claim 35, wherein: the interactive television service is accessed through the Internet, the activities of the current user m and the cumulative activities of the other users include visits to Internet web sites, and

the first collection of data further comprises data associated with:

(i) an identity of each other user,

(ii) types of Internet web sites that each other user has visited,

(iii) content of each type of Internet web site visited by each other user,
and

(iv) amount of time spent at each type of Internet web site by each other
user.

45. (Cancelled)

46. (Previously presented) An apparatus for predicting the behavior of a current
user of an interactive television service, comprising:

means for monitoring activity associated with a set top box of a current user
engaging with the interactive television service;

means for identifying activities of the current user engaging with the interactive
television service and conditions surrounding each of the identified activities, including
amount of time the current user participated in each of the identified activities;

means for accessing a first collection of data comprising data associated with:

(i) cumulative activities associated with a set top box ~~in which of~~ other
users ~~have participated~~,

(ii) conditions surrounding the cumulative activities associated with a set
top box of the other users, including amount of time that each other user
participated in each respective activity, and

(iii) patterns of behavior ~~exhibited by~~ associated with the cumulative
activities associated with a set top box of the other users and the conditions
surrounding the cumulative activities associated with a set top box of the other
users ~~the other users in the cumulative activities~~, wherein the cumulative activities
include viewing interactive television programming;

means for comparing the identified activities and surrounding conditions of the
current user with the cumulative activities and surrounding conditions of the other users
to identify similarities therebetween; ~~and~~

means for identifying a patterns of behavior associated with the identified similarity of activities and surrounding conditions between the current user and the other users; and

means for attributing to the current user [[a]] the identified pattern of ~~future~~ behavior as a future behavior of the current user, ~~based on the identified similarities and on the patterns of behavior of the other users.~~

47. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 46, wherein:

the means for identifying the conditions surrounding each of the identified activities further comprises means for identifying personal attributes of the current user;
the first collection of data further comprises data associated with personal attributes of the other users; and

means for comparing further comprises means for comparing the personal attributes of the current user with the personal attributes of the other users to identify the similarities.

48. (Cancelled)

49. (Cancelled)

50. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 46, wherein the first collection of data is based on activities the other users participated while engaged with the interactive television service.

51. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 46, wherein the other users are unrelated individual persons.

52. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 46, wherein the other users are members of a group and the current user is identifiable as a potential member of that group.

53. (Cancelled)

54. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 46, further comprising:

means for periodically updating the first collection of data to reflect the other users' ongoing participation in additional activities.

55. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 54, wherein the means for periodically updating operates in real time, during the current user's engagement with the interactive television service.

56. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 46, further comprising:

means for accessing a second collection of data comprising data associated with:

(i) a plurality of activities that are available via the interactive television service and

(ii) information about each of the plurality of available activities distinguishing the activity from others of the plurality of the available activities, wherein the means for attributing includes means for selecting, from the plurality of available activities and based on the second collection of data, one or more activities in which the current user is most likely to participate during the engagement with the interactive television service.

57. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 46, wherein:

the interactive television service is accessed through the Internet,
the activities of the current user and the cumulative activities of the other users include visits to Internet web sites, and

the first collection of data further comprises data associated with:

(i) an identity of each other user,

(ii) types of Internet web sites that each other user has visited,

(iii) content of each type of Internet web site visited by each other user,
and

(iv) amount of time spent at each type of Internet web site by each other
user.

58. (Cancelled)